**Pronouncement of Judgment, No. 3 – BD20-01**

Our Great Father in Heaven, we are thankful to thee for every opportunity that is ours to share with one another that which is the Word of truth. We pray as we reach forward this morning now to a portion of that Word, thou will give us understanding, that God the Holy Spirit will take this truth, will enable us to use it to develop our own personal spiritual maturity, in order that we may strengthen ourselves against the wiles and devices of Satan, who is ever waiting to destroy that which thou are ready to perform in us. May our hearts be open to the personal confession of sin. To this thy truth we pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

We continue to consider the pronouncements of divine judgment upon Adam and Eve consequent to their sin in the Garden of Eden. One thing that is becoming evident is that Satan is a spoiler. It his deliberate intention to ruin what God has prepared, and to ruin what God has for each of us. In 2 Corinthians chapter 2, verse 11, we read, “Lest Satan should get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices.” It is important that you realize that Satan is a spoiler. In Ephesians 6:11, we’re told to put on the whole armor of God, “that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” This is to stand against his deceitful tricks.

It has been my experience many times to see Christians who have come to very noble decisions. Sometimes I have been just amazed (and) awed by something that someone comes to me and says. “I have made the decision to do thus and so.” They’ve made a decision on behalf of themselves. They’ve made a decision on behalf of their wife or their husband. They’ve made a decision on behalf of their children. They’ve made a decision on behalf of their own personal life in business and in the Lord’s service. They’ve made a decision of a major nature where they’re going to make a move, (make) a change, (or) take an action. And I’ve been awed by it because I could sense that here was someone who was on positive volition to something that God was leading and telling that person to do. It’s always a delight to see Christians who are on positive volition.

But I have had the sad experience of seeing these same people, who made a noble decision of positive volition, find that the goal to which they set their hearts unto the direction of the spirit of God was spoiled by Satan, because someplace upon the line where Satan observed these people moving off into the plan of God, into the realization of God’s plan in their life, Satan comes in with a device. He comes in with a trick, and the person falls for it.

Ephesians says you have to put on the whole armor of God or you’ll not be able to stand against his tricks. Along comes somebody with some advice. Along comes some Christian with some influence. And by the very act of some Christian’s influence, which was some influence on human good, and you bit on it, and you lose the goal to which God was leading you. Then suddenly your whole world is dissipated and blown up in your face, and you shake your head and say, “How did this happen? I know the Lord was leading me and I was moving in the right direction. I could see all the promise that that held, and now it’s all gone.”

Well, Satan pulled a trick on you. That’s why we’re studying this passage. Right now we’re taking a look at what has happened to us. In theology, this is called anthropology. We want to see what man’s condition is. But remember that this was the result of a spoiling work on the part of Satan. As we see what he did at the beginning, and as he’s done over the centuries, we can pick up clues to his devices and to the techniques by which he carries out his work of spoiling what God has for you.

That’s the saddest thing in the world, for a Christian to move along and not to have grasped how important it is to develop spiritually so that he can get the right signals. That’s the problem. We are so confident. And, of course, the longer you’ve been a Christian, the more confident you are that you can pick up the right signals from God, and then nobody can tell you anything. When the Word of God doesn’t sound right to you, you resist it, but since you never object to the Word, instead you start hitting at the fellow who said it. You say, “He’s so arrogant. He’s so proud. He’s so haughty.” By this you mean, “He’s standing in my way.”

Can you imagine the words that Balaam had for that dumb jackass that he was riding that wouldn’t let him counter on that road when an angel stood there with a sword in his hand? And the angel stool there, and there was more brains under Balaam than there was up in his own head. Here’s this donkey who’s resisting and saying, “No.” You can imagine what Balaam said, the words he said to this donkey, “You arrogant proud no-good thing.” You just read what he said. There wasn’t anything wrong with donkey. He’s the only one that had any brains. What Balaam meant was, “You’re stopping me. You’re the standing in my way, so I consider you arrogant and haughty,” and what-not.

Well this is another device of Satan. This is the biggest trick of all. You will attack the source of your information which doesn’t make any information if that source is haughty and proud and has all kinds of frailties. The information is what counts.

So as we go through these passages, I want to alert you to be watching for how Satan is a spoiler because this is what’s going to wreck your life. This is what’s going to frustrate goals that you have that are right goals that God has placed upon you, but you never realize them. Satan comes in and spoils them through some Christian friend, through some Christian organization, or through somebody who warmed the cockles of your heart and won your devotion, and often in some materialistic way.

This is the slimiest trick in the world. You do something for somebody physically. Did you ever notice that? You do something on a physical level, on a material level for somebody, and they look upon you as a saint from heaven, and one from whom God speaks. There are more people who get carried away, particularly if you’re kind of a poor seminary student maybe, or something like that, and somebody comes along and does something for you in a material way. Oh, your heart goes out to them. Here is God’s person for me. And pretty soon you can be picking up all kinds of signals. Why? And you never stop and ask yourself, “Why am I so receptive to this person?” He filled my stomach. He gave me a bed to sleep in. He put gas in my car. You have to watch that. That’s one of Satan’s spoiling tricks.

Now in Genesis 3:15, we have been looking at the first presentation of the gospel to Adam and Eve before God pronounces judgment upon them. This is an evidence again of how God turns discipline into blessing. Both Adam and Eve are now spiritually dead with an old sin nature. They have no fellowship with God. Both are now in the slave market of sin under Satan’s complete control. Out of their old sin nature they express their human good in the form of the fig leaf loin cloths created in order to cover the problem of their sin, and the loss of their light coverings. Since then all who have been born into the human race inherit the old sin nature from their father, and they enter this slave market of sin automatically. God rejects all human good which comes from the old sin nature, and He provides divine good through Jesus Christ to pay for mankind’s sin, and thereby to enable us to leave the slave market of sin, and leave Satan’s control and come under the control of God the Holy Spirit.

In order to do this it was necessary that some one person was born outside of the slave market of sin so as to be free of the old sin nature so that he could qualify as the savior. For this reason, Jesus Christ was given a supernatural virgin birth in order to avoid the old sin nature which is inherited through the father. Genesis 3:15 therefore stresses, and gives central emphasis to the fact of the virgin birth in the expression, “the seed of the woman” which would “crush the head of Satan.”

Satan therefore seeks in our day to discredit and to belittle and to libel the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. The liberal minister presents this as a fraud, he presents Christ as a prostitute’s son, and he presents any number of possible fathers, but it rejects the idea that He had no physical father. This is Satan’s viewpoint, and whether it comes from a liberal minister or a conservative minister, it should be opposed, and it should be exposed.

We found that Isaiah expanded upon Genesis 3:15 in three major passages. In Isaiah 7:14, the savior would be virgin born. In Isaiah 9:6 we found that the savior would be a unique being. He would be a God-man. He would be both a human and a man. In Isaiah 53:9 we found that the savior would die two deaths. One of these was spiritual and the other was physical, as He provided salvation for everybody. Satan would crush the savior temporarily on the cross, but Christ would permanently crush Satan in His resurrection.

The judgment on the woman was two-fold. One, because of her part in the sin, God judged that henceforth the woman would bear children in pain. These are the labor pains of birth. Secondly, she was given an insatiable desire for the man. This means she would run after the man for fulfillment of her soul and of her body. She needs him. This fulfillment is realized completed however only through her own particular man that God has designed for her, as was expressed in the Genesis passage with the words “thy husband.” Her desire would be toward her own particular man, her husband. This is designed by God in order to keep the woman from assuming the role of aggressor which was what the problem was in the Garden of Eden—that she would have the role of responder for which she was designed, and that she would be maintained in that role rather than assuming her husband’s role who is the aggressor.

However, a woman must be careful, knowing this about herself, that she not respond to the wrong aggressor. There are plenty of men who will be aggressive toward your daughters. They must be taught that God has one particular man who is her aggressor. Any other man who is aggressive toward her is a false aggressor, and he must be rejected and must be placed under extreme limitations. Only one man is her true aggressor, and only through that man can she find complete fulfillment.

Multitudes of women never know what they’re missing in life because they have never been met and been related to their true aggressor, their own particular man. Discipline on the woman, however, is turned into blessing, for it is the savior who is to be born through her labor pains, and her right man will fulfill her being.

Now we want to look at the curse on the man. Genesis 3, beginning at verse 17 says, “And to Adam he said, ‘Because thou hast harkened unto thy wife and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee saying ‘Thou shalt not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground for thy sake. In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shall eat the herb of the field. By the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, until thou shalt return unto the ground, for out of it was thou thy taken, for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return.’”

Adam’s sin had, first of all, upon it the judgment that he lost dominion over creation. He lost his place of superiority over all creation which, up to that point, had been under his control and direction. He had violated God’s plan by accepting the role of responder to his wife. He should have immediately rejected that role. Any man today whose wife ever tries to give him the role of responder should immediately reject it. You can spot these women. We’ve already gone over various signals of a woman who is an aggressor, and she is not very feminine, and she is not very happy, and she is unresponsive because she is in that wrong role.

This man Adam chose to listen to his wife instead of to God. That’s what it amounted to, and it proved disastrous to both of them. It always does when a man chooses to listen to his wife instead of to God. Adam thereby repudiated his superiority over creation so that God said, “Henceforth all of creation will resist your will.” If there ever was a man who had a green thumb, it was Adam, until the fall, and after that, all of nature was against him.

The second judgment was that the earth would be cursed, so it would resist him. Up to now it had produced fool spontaneously for man without any effort on his part. Now man was to get his food only in sorrow. His wife was to experience labor pains, and he was to experience pain of labor. Henceforth there would be no natural products of the earth that he could simply enjoy. Instead, the natural products of the earth would be thorns and thistles.

In Romans chapter 8 verses 19-22 you have this description of creation being under this judgment, and creation itself looking forward to the day of the millennium when it is released from this kind of bondage of the judgment brought upon it by the sin of man. The Lord Jesus Christ wore a crown of thorns, symbolizing this very curse which was upon the earth, bearing its thorns.

Animals became ferocious, and carnivorous. Now they were meat-eaters. They were to continue as such until the millennium where again they are going to be tamed. Isaiah 11:6-9 and Isaiah 65:25 tell you about the change of animals in the millennial period. “All the days of thy life,” this would continue for Adam, which indicated there would be a termination for his physical life, and that was when he was 930 years old. His physical death was a result of his spiritual death. Life span since Adam’s time has gradually been shortened. In the millennium, it will again be extended (Isaiah 65:20), where people will live literally for centuries during the millennial age.

Once Adam ate freely of every tree of the garden. Now he’s scrounging for herbs in the fields, trying to stay alive from an earth that will no longer produce for him. Verse 19 indicates that he would return to the ground from whence he came, this discipline of physical death. Food was necessary to sustain life. Now it was going to be secured by strenuous effort and the sweat of his face. One day his body was going to die. He was to return to the chemicals of the ground from which he was originally made. “Out of it was thou taken” refers to his body, of course, not to his spirit or his soul. The body is simply a house that God designed for the spirit and soul. It’s a tent. It’s a tabernacle. That’s its value. The real person is the spirit and soul that lives inside of your body. The spirit and soul never die, contrary to (the teaching of) some of the cults. The spirit and soul never die. It is only your body that dies. Death is summarized in the word “separation.” Physical death is the spirit and soul leaving your body.

So after a person dies, what do we have left? Well we have left chemicals of the ground. That’s what we have left. We have somebody who has a certain shape and feature of someone you once knew in life. But what you are looking at when you look at that dead person, is a pile of chemicals. In time, that’s all it will be. There is nothing sacred about a dead human body. Until you understand some Bible doctrine, you’re going to act like a pagan at funeral of someone who is a loved on to you. You will be making over a dead body. I think it’s rather a monstrous practice to have funerals where the casket is open. I think when people finally come to a certain point of spiritual maturity, they move that body from its deathbed into the hospital, into the mortician’s establishment, he does his job, that body is placed within that casket, and it’s closed, and it’s not opened again. It doesn’t fly open until resurrection day, if there’s anything to fly out of it then. But it remains closed. The only image you have of that person is the image you had in life.

It is a paganistic custom that we’ve inherited from pagan practices to make over a dead body at a funeral service. You (may) have been in the presence of people who stood before dead bodies and have screamed and thrown themselves on the floor and carried on, You (may) have been in the presence of funeral services where the preacher is enough of a professional to know that people’s emotions are on edge, and all he has to do is do a little exciting of those emotions with the right words, and he can really throw them overboard into a lot of emotional expression so he proves that he gave a wonderful funeral sermon. The body is going to die someday, and when it’s dead, it has no value whatsoever.

The believer, when he’s resurrected, he’s going to get a new body. He’s not going to get that old body back. He’s going to get a new body that’s made like unto the Lord Jesus Christ’s body. He’s going to get a body that is free of time and space, and has all the dramatic qualities of a resurrection body. As we were telling you in prayer meeting last week, some of the people from last Sunday night wanted to know, “Will I be able to enjoy the millennium in my body?. Here I have a resurrection body. Can I enjoy the millennium? They’re a little envious of the people who are going to be here in natural bodies because the millennium is going to be a time (with) no sickness, no deformity, no hunger, no labor management problems, the perfect work situations, and ideal recreation—recreation of the most fantastic kind. Will you be able to enjoy it?

Yes, I think you’ll be able to enjoy it. We said you’ll be able to water ski, and when you fall, you’ll be able to just walk on the water back to the shore. And all of the mortals will stand there and punch one another and say, “Look at that.” You’ll be the envy of the universe. You’ll move as you please. And if you fly, and your airplane stops—the engine conks out up there—you just get out and spin the prop up there and you get going again, and there’s no problem. It’s all very exciting. You can just look forward to all the things that you enjoy now, but you’re going to enjoy on a much more expanded scale, but you’re going to do it in a resurrection body. It’s going to be a totally different body from what you have.

The body in life gives evidence of the stamp of death upon it. Have some of you noticed that you don’t look as good now as you did a few years ago? I have. I’ve been around long enough to have seen some of you over quite a long expanse of time. One of the things I’ve been doing around here for years is taking movies. We’ve taken movies as far back as the first Bible School of 1951. Every now and then, on some Sunday night, as a special feature, I pull in a movie from 15, 16, or 17 years ago, and let you see yourself as you once were, and it is a riot. Everybody goes home crying. How good it used to be. You notice that the body deteriorates.

When you’re young, and you’re energetic, and you’re all smooth looking, and you have all that vitality, and you look good, you can be a real rat on the inside. You can be the biggest louse there is, and your youthful outward appearance covers it up. But … as you get older, and the outward man begins to bear the effects of death that is stamped upon it, and (it) deteriorates. If you’re a louse on the outside then, it’s going to show up more and more because the outside isn’t going to cover for you. Many a person who is a very unpalatable personality covers it up with his youth. But when you get older, you can’t cover it up, and the real you is what stands out in striking contrast to any image you may have cast before then. So it is the course of wisdom, and this is what we mean by inner beauty. Peter speaks of a woman’s inner beauty. This is the course of wisdom to start building up the spiritual maturity structure in your soul because that’s what makes you beautiful. No matter how wrinkled and prunish-looking you are on the outside, if you have a spiritual maturity structure on the inside, you are indeed a beautiful person.

So Adam was told that there would be upon him this judgment that he would die, and that he would return to the chemicals of the soil, that he has lost his dominion over the earth, (and) he’s no longer in control. Satan is in control. The earth is now cursed so it will no longer produce for him. His ultimate end is to be death.

Then in verses 20 and 21, we have the salvation accepted which God has offered to them in Genesis 3:15. “And Adam called his wife’s name Eve.” It looks like this in the Hebrew: “chauah.” It means, “giver of life.” She was to be the channel providing the Lord Jesus Christ who would come as the giver of eternal life. Adam calling his wife by this name, the giver of life, the giver particularly of spiritual life through the savior who would come as her seed, indicated that he had believed the promise concerning the woman’s seed, and that he was now born again. He had accepted what God had promised. Adam was the first person to be saved. His faith was based upon the virgin birth provision and promise.

Adam said, “She is to be the mother of all living,” which meant that all the human race was descent from her. Adam is the father of all the dead (Romans 5:12, 1 Corinthians 15:22a). Eve is the mother of all living, and Adam is the father of all dead.

In verse 21 we have an application of this salvation symbolized. Their salvation is symbolized. “For Adam also and for his wife did the Lord God make coats of skin and clothed them.” Coats of skin, of course, animal skins, had to be obtained by the shedding of life of blood, taking the life of an innocent animal in order to provide this covering, which was God’s divine good covering for their sin, in place of that ridiculous loincloth of fig leaves that they had woven for themselves. This act, of course, symbolized the death of the savior who was promised, and of the redemption which would come through him.

In 1 John 1:7, John says, “But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship, one with another, and the blood (the life) of Jesus Christ His Son cleansed us from all sin.” In Hebrews 9:22, “And almost all things are by the law, purged with blood, and without the shedding of blood (the giving of an innocent life for a guilty life) is no remission.” In 1 Peter 1:18, “For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things like silver and gold from your vain manner of life received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

So what God was doing when He gave them these skins for clothing, was demonstrating to them what He was going to do in the future in providing a death in their behalf to cover their sins. They who had died spiritually would have someone else who would die spiritually for them. They who had suffered the consequences of spiritual death in physical death would have that physical death removed through resurrection because of what Christ was going to provide.

So the coats, the clothing that He provided, spoke of imputation of divine righteousness at the point of their salvation. Both Adam and Eve accepted the promise. Both were born again. So grace provided the divine covering in place of their legalism and their human good of fig leaf loincloths.

You and I face God the same way. You can either face God with your fig leaf clothing of your human good, or you can and face Him on what He has provided. You’ll never be at ease in the presence of God in your loincloth of fig leaves, but you’ll be perfectly at ease in the covering which He has provided for you.

So Adam and Eve are born again. Today the issue is not sin. Jesus Christ has removed that. This issue is human good versus divine. God is perfect. His provision therefore is perfect. He has perfectly provided for our sins. Man is imperfect, and the only thing man can provide for his sin is also imperfect. Genesis 3:15 is the gospel presented, and the gospel accepted.

Then in verse 22 of Genesis 3, God takes one more action in His judgment against them. They are expelled from the Garden of Eden. In Genesis 3:22, “And the Lord said, ‘Behold the man has become as one of us (that is one of the Trinity), to know good and evil. And now lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever,’ therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden, to till the ground from where he was taken. So he drove out the man, and He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.”

Remember that there was another tree in that garden—not only the special tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but there was a tree of life. Apparently, man up to this point man had not eaten of the tree of life. Man knew good and evil now by experience, as God knows good and evil by omniscience. This knowledge had contaminated man’s nature. Now he was a sinner (with an) old sin nature, unfit for heaven. He could walk over to the other part of the garden and, in that condition, eat from the tree of life. And if he did, a very disastrous thing would have taken place. For had he eaten of the tree of life, he would have then lived forever in the condition of spiritual death with an old sin nature. There could never have been a savior provided through the human race. Nobody could have been saved. Salvation would not have even been an issue. Man would have lived forever separated from God in the misery of sin.

So at this point God had to take some action. The man had not yet eaten from the tree of life, as is indicated by the word “also.” “He has become one of us lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life.” He hasn’t done that yet so God is going to take action to keep him from doing that. The tree of life could never provide forgiveness of sins, or absolute righteousness. It just would perpetuate him in his state of sin. Only exercise of positive volition toward the tree of the cross is going to give him righteousness and forgiveness. There was no chance for his posterity if he ate of this tree. His posterity would have no chance of selecting eternal life. They would be born in this state where they would have their sin nature perpetuated forever.

So the cross would bring eternal life. It was another tree that God provided—the tree of the cross. This one … would give him a resurrection body free of the old sin nature.

So we’re told that He drove man out. In the Hebrew, this is in the intensive stem which means that man was somewhat loathed to leave, naturally, this place, but God was determined to drive him out of (the) perfect environment, and He did. And He provided him with a defense against going back into the garden. What’s to keep man from turning right around and going back into the Garden of Eden? Well, God put an angel, and he gave Him a flaming sword that went in all directions surrounding this garden, protecting this garden, and the angel’s wielding this flaming sword prevented man from ever returning to the Garden of Eden. For all we know, it may still be there, and the angel’s still guarding it.

By removing man from the garden in this way, God removed him with his volition intact. Man could still choose now (between) the tree of the cross or he could reject it. If he had eaten of the tree of life, his volition would have been gone. There could have been nothing he could have chosen after that. So this was again a discipline that was a kindness that God exercised upon man. Regeneration actually gives man a much higher position than he had before he fell.

So here’s a summary: An interesting comparison man’s curse and the work of Christ on the cross. As we compare the two, we find that the ground was cursed, though it was innocent. Jesus Christ was cursed for sin, though He was innocent. In Galatians 3:13, Paul writes, “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, ‘cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree.” The ground was cursed though it was innocent. Jesus Christ was cursed on our account though he was innocent.

Secondly, the earth brings forth thorns. We read that the Lord Jesus Christ wore a crown of thorns because of our sin.

Number three, man earns bread by the sweat of his face. Jesus Christ in Gethsemane, for our salvation sweat great drops of blood. In Luke 22:44, we read, “And being in agony, he prayed more earnestly. And the sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground.”

Number four, man returns to dust in death, and Jesus Christ was brought out of the dust in resurrection. Psalm 22:15 says, “My strength is dried up like a potsherd. My tongue cleaves to my jaws. Thou hast brought me into the dust of death.”

Number five, man by sin died spiritually. Jesus Christ, by bearing our sins, died spiritually on the Cross. Isaiah 53:9 says, “And He made his grave with the wicked and the rich in His deaths, because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth.” He died spiritually. In Matthew 27:46, we read, “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice saying, ‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani,’ that is to say, ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’” So He is separated from God in His spiritual death.

And finally, man died twice. He died spiritually at once (Genesis 3:6). Adam died physically at 930 years of age (Genesis 5:5). His physical death was a result of his spiritual death. Jesus Christ also died twice. He died spiritually during the last three hours on the cross (Psalm 22:1, 2 Corinthians 5:21). Then He died physically when He said, “It is finished” (John 19:30). When His sin-bearing mission was completed, He dismissed His spirit.

So man is born physically alive but spiritually dead. Every baby is born physically alive but spiritually dead. But a man who is born again is spiritually alive with eternal life for his physical body. It amounts to this: A man who is born once, will die twice. But a man who is born twice, will only die once, unless the rapture takes place. A man who is once: If this is your condition this morning, and you have nothing but a physical birth, then you’re going to die twice. You will someday die physically, and you will die spiritually. You’ll be separated from your soul and spirit, and you’ll forever be separated from God in your soul and spirit. If you have only been born once, you will die twice. If you have been born twice, that is, you have been born physically, and you have received Christ as your savior, and therefore you have been born spiritually, then you’re only going to die once. The only way you can die is physically, unless the rapture takes place, and then you won’t even die physically.

So as you look at the grim story in those opening verses here in Genesis 3, of man’s fall into sin, it’s a kind of discouraging picture. But it’s against the brilliant background of the fact that God changes discipline into blessing. This is how He did it, because out of that, we are elevated to a position far above angels. All of us positionally now are seated in heaven. We are above all angels. We are seated with Jesus Christ. We are in Him. We are superior to every angel that ever lived.

I hope that if you have not accepted Christ as your savior, so that all you have is one physical birth, that you do something about it today. It is a hazardous position. If you die with that one birth, you will die twice. There will be no return from it. Whereas if you come alive spiritually, you have nothing to fear—maybe not even physical death itself. Shall we pray?

Heavenly father, we thank thee for this thy Word. Again we ask thee to give us understanding and gratefulness to thee. Help us to appreciate the fact that Satan is a spoiler. Help us to see clearly what thou has done for us through thy Son, and to realize what it is that Satan is trying to spoil. Help us to realize that once we have accepted thy Son, we enter thy salvation and we enter thy plan. And from then on, our functioning under thy care and direction. Help us to realize that this is what Satan seeks to spoil in those who are believers—the realization of thy plan in our lives. So we pray, oh God, that thou will help us to have a great respect toward what we have learned over these recent months concerning growing up in spiritual things as a Christian, and that each of us may review again and again that area of our study so that we may examine ourselves in these facets of the pentagon of our spiritual maturity, and be aware of how Satan is seeking to restrain and to discourage and to cause us to take this so indifferently so that we are not prepared for his devices, we are not prepared for his tricks, and he is able to spoil that which we could be in thy hands. Oh, God, protect us from human good. Make us Christians who function on thy divine good. We pray in Christ’s name. Amen.